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ABSTRACT

This booklet offers practical, up-to-date information on early childhood literacy for those who interact with young children. Topics addressed by the booklet include: (1) supportive learning environments; (2) learning to talk; (3) optimizing learning; (4) supporting the literacy development of young children; and (5) fundamental principles for literacy learning. Discussion in this latter area focuses on literacy beginning with talking and listening, ideas for activating imagination, ideas for promoting talk in early childhood settings, reading as comprehension, cueing systems, ideas for promoting reading in early childhood settings, recommended authors, writing as a powerful form of human expression, and ideas for promoting writing in early childhood settings. (Contains 13 references.) (EV)

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Lifting the lid

on Early Childhood Literacy

by Kaye Lowe

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on Early Childhood Literacy

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About the Au

Kaye Lowe is a senior lecturer at UWS Nepean where she teaches literacy in the early childhood program. She has worked extensively with children 0–8 as a director of a child care centre and as a classroom teacher and executive in the junior years of school. Kaye works and researches with teachers and parents of young children in a number of diverse situations including the United States and Fiji. She is committed to having children of all ages fall in love with books. She is passionate about the evolution of young children's writing and has published a number of books celebrating what young children have to say.

Kaye's research often involves her working with readers and writers who strive to overcome their perceived difficulties. She conducts many parent courses on how to help children at home with literacy learning. She recognises and actively promotes the role of parents and early child care workers in supporting and encouraging young learners to want to read and write with enthusiasm, and for real reasons.

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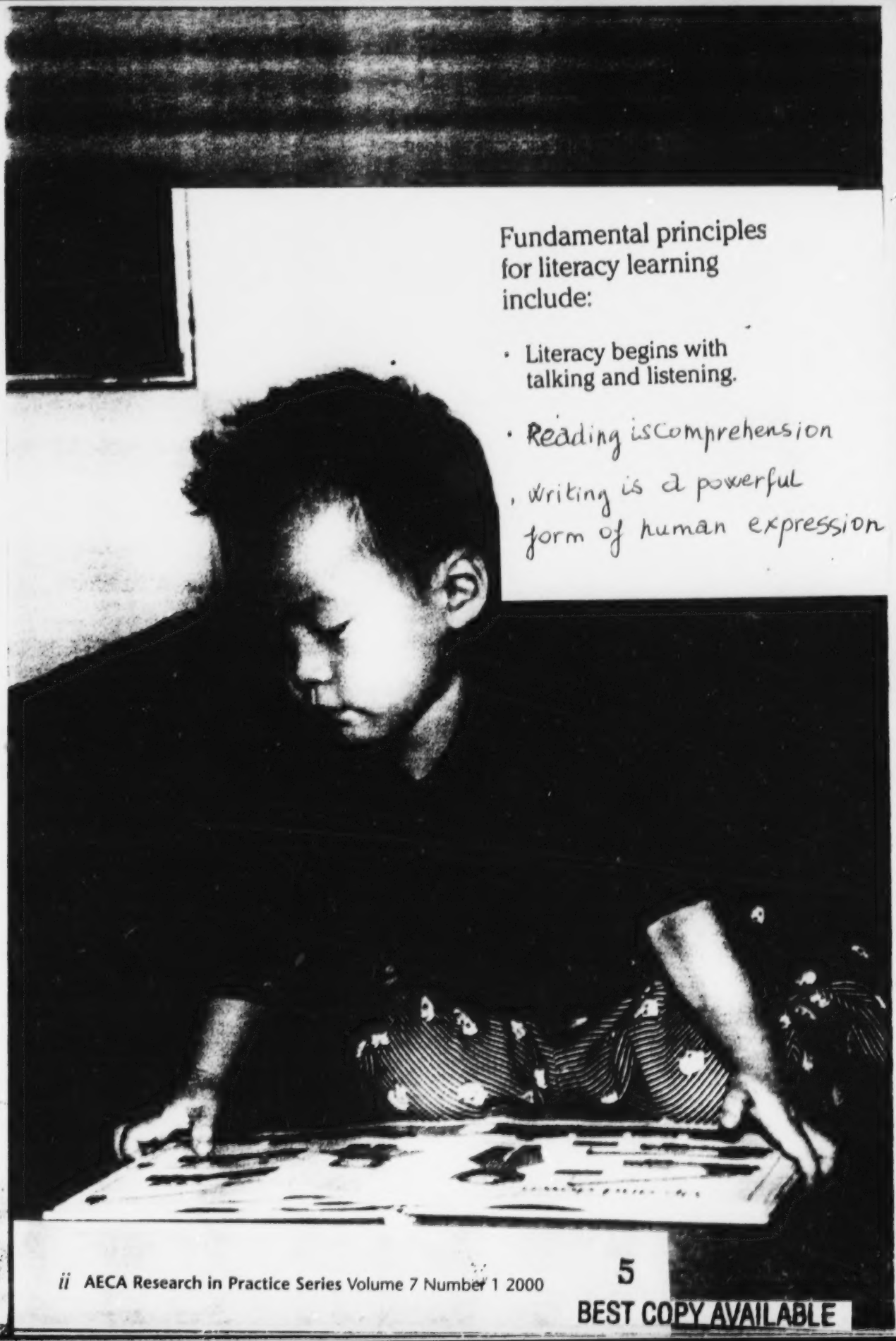

Fundamental principles for literacy learning include:

- Literacy begins with talking and listening.
- Reading is comprehension
- Writing is a powerful form of human expression

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Lifting the Lid

on Early Childhood Literacy

Introduction

Literacy development does not start with formal instruction in a classroom. Children enter school already competent in many aspects of literacy. They have knowledge of language and how it works; experiences with, and observations of, language in a variety of contexts; and they can usually imitate literacy use—reading and writing—using a variety of invented forms. Success in literacy learning comes from embracing what young children already know. It is also dependent upon our willingness to understand how children acquire literacy and how it is used to shape who we are and how we live.

Success in literacy learning comes from embracing what young children already know

When children read and write they draw on all the knowledge they have of how language works. They observe and make sense of their world through the signs and symbols embedded in their environments. Some carry more significance than others; most children can read M for MacDonalds from a distance of two kilometres at the age of six months. Young children can identify their favourite books on a shelf of many volumes and are often so familiar with these stories that the reader is reprimanded for any variation of the text with, for example, 'You missed a page' or 'That's not what the wolf says'. These responses are timely reminders to the reader about who owns the story.

Young children understand the power of words and print, and manipulate these to make their meanings known. For example, a friend's three-year-old son woke him very early one morning wanting a drink of Coke. The father explained that the bottle of Coke had been in the work van in the hot sun the previous day and was not fit to drink.

His son then fetched the bottle, pointed to the information about the contents, and stated that the little words at the bottom said 'This Coke will not make you sick if you drink it.' He had attached his own meaning in order to have his needs met.

Supportive Learning Environments

A supportive learning environment starts with a positive attitude towards diversity in all its forms

A supportive learning environment starts with a positive attitude towards diversity in all its forms. Activities should be designed to reflect the home backgrounds and interests of the children. When such an environment is created, children become confident and enthusiastic literacy users. Celebrating diversity allows positive links with the community to be established and reinforces the message that all learners are valued.

It is essential to get to know the children in our care. Taking time to listen and interact with each child is crucial in supporting learning. Children need time to explain their attempts at speaking, reading, and writing without fear of threat or humiliation. Young children tend to draw on the models and demonstrations around them and these are embedded in social and cultural contexts.

As caregivers and teachers, we need to be conscious of the meanings and expectations we attach to the literacy experiences we provide. The assumption that all children are read bedtime stories, have access to books and writing material in their homes, and can recite nursery rhymes and songs, can put undue pressure on the child to conform to our sometimes misconstrued definitions of what is culturally appropriate and relevant to literacy learning. The diverse range of language and literacy experiences children bring to the learning situation needs to recognised, embraced, and respected.

So what can do we do in these early years to promote a love of language and a smooth transition into literacy? The beginnings lie in talk.

Learning to Talk

Learning language, in all its forms, should be fun. Children generally do it quickly and with relative ease. Research by Peregoy and Boyle (1997) claims that children demonstrate basic competence in a second language within six months to two years after their arrival in a new country. They can make themselves understood to those around them while conducting daily tasks. However, the research explains that it may take them up to five years to reach the same level of competence as their native speaking peers. Perhaps the motivation to reach competency in any language is embedded in real needs and the human desire to belong.

The process of learning to talk is a complex operation but children tend to master the rules that govern language with relative ease. Young children quickly learn the difference between:

- *I wash herself;*
- *She washes myself; and*
- *I wash myself.*

Children talk their way to meaning. Sometimes, as adults, we forget to listen to the meaning they are pursuing, and attempt to impose what we think they should know or need to know. This was made apparent to my colleague when working with a group of five-year-olds during *Show and Tell Time.**

Children learn to talk regardless of the language into which they are born. They learn to talk by using words for real purposes and to meet self-determined needs. Halliday (1975) points out that language is learned when it is relevant and is used to perform a function.

*Listening to children's agendas

Five year old Jane was particularly eager to share her news with her peers. She proudly stated that her sister had found a condom on the verandah. Young hands immediately were raised, the children keen to pursue the topic. My colleague sat practising responses to the inevitable questions that would follow. However, the first enthusiastic respondent left little doubt that children have their agendas and seek answers to their own questions, not ours. He politely asked: 'Would you mind telling me, what is a verandah?'

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Halliday (1975) identifies functions evident in the language of young children as:

Instrumental

Language is used to satisfy a personal need and complete a task.

I want

Regulatory

Language is used to control the behaviour of others.

Do as I say

Interactional

Language is used to get along with others.

Mummy and me

Personal

Language is used to tell about oneself.

I am

Heuristic

Language is used to find out about things to learn.

Why

Imaginative

Language is used for pretending to make believe.

Let's play

Informative

Language is used to communicate something for the information of others.

Do you know

Optimising Learning

A number of conditions have been identified as optimising the process of learning. These conditions are grounded in the work of leading theorists, educators, philosophers, and psychologists, including Piaget, Bruner, Dewey, Vygotsky and Montessori; and have been categorised by Cambourne (1989). The following conditions nurture the growth of language and literacy learning:

- **Immersion**

  When learning to talk, children are surrounded by the language of their culture. Similarly, in learning to read and write, children need to be immersed in a variety of texts. They need to see reading and writing happening around them and being used to fulfil a variety of purposes.

- **Demonstration**

  When learning to talk, children receive many demonstrations of how language works, and within a short time they have mastered complex grammatical rules that govern language usage. As Gleason (1997) points out, 'By the time they get to kindergarten, children have amassed a vocabulary of about 8,000 words and almost all of the basic grammatical forms of their language' (p.7). Demonstrations of how language works are given generously through ongoing communication with others. Parents generally do not keep score of the number of such demonstrations; e.g. when a child asks for 'juice' the response is likely to be 'Oh! You mean Jack wants some juice.' The parent or caregiver demonstrates another way to ask for juice without the child fearing correction.

- **Engagement**

  Learners must be convinced that they are capable of performing what is demonstrated. They have to be convinced of the value of what is being learned. In order to persist with the learning, the learner must trust those doing the demonstrations. Immersion and

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demonstration without engagement does not guarantee that learning will occur. For example, merely observing others parachuting and participating in demonstrations of parachuting does not ensure that you can parachute. The real learning occurs in the 'doing' of parachuting.

- **Expectations**

  Expectations are powerful coercers of behaviour, and it is essential that the learner bonds with those committed to 'high and realistic expectations' of their learning.

- **Responsibility**

  In learning to talk, the learner assumes responsibility and masters words that result in them having power over their environment. 'No' is one of the most powerful words a two-year-old knows and uses with effect. Parents and caregivers want children to take responsibility for expressing their needs. Learners make their own decisions about when, how, and what gets learned. They make decisions about the demonstrations with which they choose to engage. When it comes to learning to read and write, the same level of choice and responsibility should be valued and applied.

- **Use**

  Learners need time and opportunities to employ what is being learned. Social interaction with others is vital to learning to talk. As Hymes (see Pride & Holmes, 1972) states: 'A normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner' (p.277). Learning is a social process, and the same principles can equally be applied to learning to read and write—children need to use these skills in collaboration with others.

- **Approximations**

  Learners must be willing to approximate the desired model. In learning to talk, the young child is encouraged to approximate, and parents celebrate

Conditions which nurture language and literacy learning are:

- Immersion
- Demonstration
- Engagement
- Expectations
- Responsibility
- Use
- Approximations
- Response

Fundamental principles for literacy learning include:

- Literacy begins with talking and listening.
- Reading is comprehension.
- Writing is a powerful form of human expression.

these early attempts at language. 'Da da' is not regarded as a mistake to be rectified or punished, but as a unique attempt by the learner to acknowledge 'dad'. Irrespective of what is being learned, approximations are essential to the process of acquiring new skills and knowledge.

- **Response**

  Learners must receive feedback from exchanges with significant others that are relevant, appropriate, timely, and non-threatening.

Supporting the Literacy Development of Young Children

The four key components of literacy learning are:

- *talking*
- *listening*
- *reading, and*
- *writing.*

All are closely interconnected and best support literacy development when dealt with in an holistic manner. There are fundamental principles that provide the necessary scaffolding for literacy learning in the early years and three principles are explained below. They are supported with ideas to use in the early childhood setting.

Fundamental Principles for Literacy Learning

◦ Literacy Begins with Talking and Listening

Children develop their levels of literacy through interactions with others across a variety of contexts. The rhythm and rhyme of language inspires the young learner to capture the wonder of words. Songs, jingles, alliteration, rhymes, unusual dialects, books—all entice the learner to explore the nuances of language.

The wonderful array of children's literature available today goes a long way towards supporting language

growth. Children need to be indulged in language. When children are read to regularly they build up an affinity for words and these words live on in their thoughts long after the reading has ceased. Alongside is a list of ideas for activating young children's imaginations and expanding their vocabularies while having fun (Saxby, 1997).

When designing language-rich experiences in the early childhood setting, it is important to consider the following principles:

- Children's unique personal language needs to be valued. Linguistic diversity and dialects reflect the uniqueness and richness of language. Factors that impact on dialect include age, socioeconomic group, and geographic region;
- Language is constantly evolving. Changes in pronunciation and meaning are to be expected and should be valued as part of the evolutionary process;
- Children enter early childhood settings with well-established language patterns. These language patterns, once learned, can be unlearned only when the learner perceives a need to change. Language and identity are intertwined—when an attempt is

Ideas for activating imaginations & expanding vocabulary.

Lullabies and cradle songs
'Hush-a-bye baby, on the tree top'

Body games—exploring fingers and toes
'Round and round the merry-go-round'

Knee-riding—
'Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross"

Counting games and rhymes
'One, two buckle my shoe'

Skipping and running games
'Orange and lemons'

Chants
'Rain, rain go away'

Jingles
'Rub-a-dub-dub'

Cumulative stories
'There was an old woman who swallowed a fly'

Nonsense
'Old Mother Hubbard'

(Saxby, 1997)

When an attempt is made to change someone's language, their identity and culture is at stake

made to change someone's language, their identity and culture is at stake. Language does not change just because someone tells you that it needs to change;

- Children need to feel that their contribution is valued and that they are heard. They should be included in conversations, particularly conversations about them. They should be given ample time to express their meanings without fear of being ridiculed or ignored.

Ideas for promoting talk in the early childhood setting

Children need things and events to talk about and interested people with whom to share their knowledge and experiences. Many opportunities for sharing exist, and include:

Centres—shop, drawing, post office, doctor's surgery, reading corner, dress-up, house, construction, special event centre, such as a large block of ice left to melt;

Excursions—local environment including shops, post office, ambulance, movies, special places, such as the beach;

Special days—colour days, family days, theme days, special activity days, such as kite-flying days, Crazy Fridays;

Time—for quiet conversations, singing, choral reading, chanting, drama, interactions with adults and peers, stories, imaginative play, adventures, being alone with a favourite book;

Retellings—events experienced, stories read, television programs, movies;

Drama—puppets, musicals, improvisations of favourite stories.

◦ Reading is Comprehension

When children begin to explore their worlds, they become aware of print, and it follows that ' ... the more children are read to and the more they see others reading and writing, the more importance print will have in their lives' (Sampson, Sampson & Allen, 1995). Essential to learning to read is an understanding that reading is a process of gaining meaning from print.

Research by Goodman (in Morrow, 1997) found that preschool and kindergarten children knew a lot about the reading process. They were aware of the differences between letter characters and pictures in books, how to

handle a book, and how to turn pages. And they knew that books were sources of meaning through printed words' (p.12). When learning to read, children use their background knowledge of how print works, their familiarity with the language, and their interest in the topics being read about. They expect reading and writing to make sense.

Creating a literacy-rich environment in an early childhood setting gives a powerful message about the value and purposes of literacy. Literacy-rich environments are those where books are shared enthusiastically, environmental print is used for real purposes rather than to decorate the walls, and everyone actively engages in a diverse range of reading and writing activities. When children encounter print in this way, the following understandings become apparent:

- reading is enjoyable;
- being read to enhances knowledge about books and print;
- print carries the message and there is a relationship between the words spoken by the reader and the print on the page;
- readers construct meaning as they engage with print;
- reading and writing are interconnected;
- reading and writing are tools that help us make sense of our world;
- reading and writing occur in many forms—labels, books, advertising, newspapers.

When confronting difficult-to-pronounce words, e.g. cultural-specific words, ask the children if they know how to pronounce them

Cueing systems that readers use and should be made aware of from an early age

Readers make use of all of the following four cueing systems as they strive to make meaning.

1. **Semantics**—the meanings of words.

For example, to complete the sentence 'The cowboy jumped on his _____ and rode away,' readers draw on their knowledge of cowboys and riding and predict that the missing word is horse, pony, or stallion. Readers constantly ask themselves: 'Does that make sense?' They know that reading is about predicting and anticipating on the basis of meaning.

2. **Grapho phonics**—visual features, such as the shape and size of words; sound-letter knowledge.

For example, to complete the sentence 'The _ a _ purred after lapping its milk.' On the basis of meaning, the reader may predict 'kitten', which makes sense and is grammatically correct. However, in considering the visual clues and the available phonic information, the reader predicts that the missing word is 'cat'.

3. **Syntax**—the grammar of the language.

Young children learn quickly that grammatical patterns in English are fairly predictable and that 'Cat is the on mat the' is nonsensical. They expect that the author's intention is to make sense and not to confuse or baffle the reader.

4. Pragmatics—the situational context.

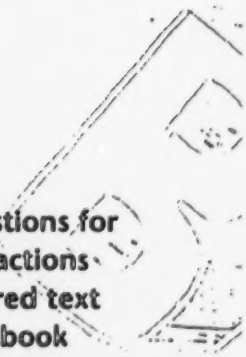
Readers become familiar with a range of text types and build up expectations of how different texts work. For example, a fairy story begins with 'Once upon a time', a newspaper is organised in columns and consists primarily of short reports, a shopping list contains items to be purchased and usually is written in columns.

When reading to young children, draw attention to these cueing systems by asking problem-solving questions that lead the child back to the text rather than away from it. The questions should reinforce the strategies that good readers use. Avoid questions such as 'It is the same colour as the shirt that you wore yesterday. Do you remember?' Encouraging the child to seek out picture clues or to go back into the text for clues is a better way to develop an understanding of the reading process.

When reading stories aloud, ensure that the children can see the print. Have them read the parts with which they are familiar. Predictable books with repetition are particularly helpful for building the confidence of young children.

When reading aloud, acknowledge the mistakes you make and explain the process you go through in rectifying the problem. By saying things like 'Oh I thought the word was ... but that did not make sense. Let me have another look', children come to realise that mistakes are an integral part of the process. When confronting difficult-to-pronounce words, e.g. cultural-specific words—ask the children if they know how to pronounce them and then explain: 'I am not sure how you pronounce this Greek word so I am going to say it this way.'

Draw children's attention to the unique visual and sound features of words—long, short, rhyming, usual letter combinations, strange shapes, different fonts, words that start and end like their names. Discuss the features of texts and display a range of text types. Think creatively about the variety of notes and newsletters sent to parents, innovative signs, and the array of children's work that could be displayed around the centre.



Effective questions for guiding interactions around a shared text such as a big book

- **'Look at the cover, what do you think this book might be about? Why?'**
- **Pointing to the title—'What do you think this might say? Why?'**
- **Pointing to the author—'What do you think this might say? Why?'**
- **'Let's look at the pictures in the book.' (Spend time poring over the illustrations and discuss.) 'What do you think might happen in this story?'**

Recommended authors who inspire young children include:

Mem Fox

Eric Carle

Eric Hill

Jan Pienkowski

Alison Lester

Julie Vivas

Bob Graham

Shirley Hughes

Pamela Allen

Pat Hutchins

Maurice Sendak

John Burningham

Each time a book is re-read, new insights are gained and different needs are being met

Ideas for promoting reading in the early childhood setting

- **Give children a designated time and place to explore books.**

  Make the reading centre a comfortable place to spend time. Arrange lots of books within easy reach. Change the books regularly and organise displays around children's favourites, themes, illustrators and authors. When a book has been read aloud, place it on the shelf immediately so that the children can read it again at their leisure. Include books the children have made to enhance the idea that their writing is valued. Make big books, little books, rag books, flap books, counting books, shape books, wordless books, 'me' books, novelty books. Include photo albums with events labeled. Make poetry cards with the children's favourites decorated and laminated. Compile a poetry anthology of 'poems we love'. Give poems as gifts.

- **Develop a passion and love for children's books.**

  Take time out to sit with children in small groups or individually to talk about books. Become familiar with quality books and impart your enthusiasm to children and parents.

  Marvel at the wonderful illustrations by Jeannie Baker, Jan Tanner, Julie Vivas, Raymond Briggs, Quentin Blake, Colin Thompson, Rod Clement. Graeme Base, Patricia Mullins. Encourage children to find 'Wally' in *Where is Wally?*, 'Spot' hiding in and under things, the camera in *Alfred's Camera*, and the mice in *Animalia*. Celebrate the number of times these books are read over and over. Remember that each time the book is re-read, new insights are gained and different needs are being met.

- **Build upon the knowledge and experience children bring to the classroom.**

  Write books with the children about their experiences outside of the classroom setting. Create

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opportunities for them to explore their ideas and real purposes for using reading and writing. Let them dictate the signs to go on lockers, cupboards, and furniture. Acknowledge the authors of these labels. Occasionally, when reading aloud, stop reading and have the children predict the next word based on knowledge of the topic. Read a predictable story and stop at opportune times for them to predict possible endings. Take a walk in the local environment and have the children read and photograph the signs they see. Start a big book of 'Signs in our neighbourhood'.

- **Provide many opportunities for children to investigate how language works.**

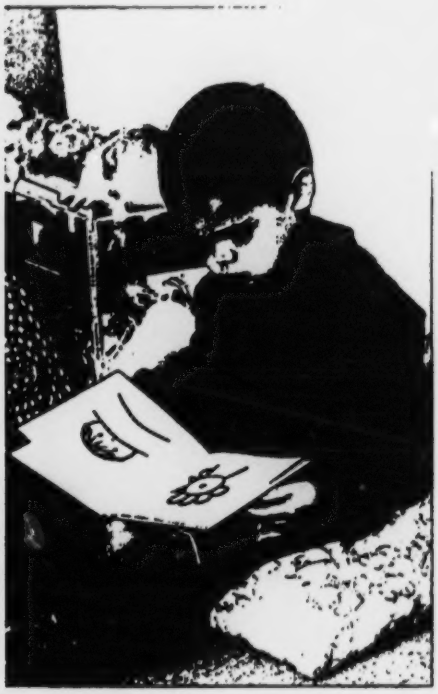
  Play language games with children—make up funny rhymes, create improvisations of familiar rhymes, substitute the children's names in songs, make a special book of songs and sing along. Play games such as 'I spy' using name tags and labels. Have lots of alphabet books for children to contemplate at their leisure.

  Make the local newspaper and magazines available and discuss a news item regularly. Take every opportunity to write messages to the children: on 'post it' notes, on a whiteboard placed near the entrance, or on small cards about their daily activities. Have the children design their own laminated table mats and include pictures and lists of the foods they like to eat.

- **Demonstrate constantly the connection between reading and writing.**

  Whenever there is a writing task to be completed, take the time to do this in the presence of children. Explain to them what you do as you write and why. 'I am just going to start this letter to Mrs Brown. I will start with "Dear" because that is the polite way of starting a letter.' While preparing the shopping list: 'I am not sure how you spell "spaghetti"; I will just write "spag" and that will remind me to take a close look at the tin in the supermarket.'

Read a predictable story and stop at opportune times for children to predict possible endings



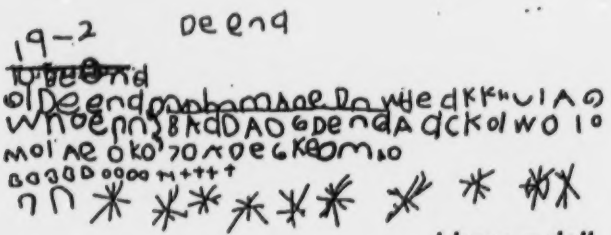
◦ Writing—A powerful form of human expression

Children begin writing at an early age. Perhaps writing has its rudimentary beginnings in the early scribbles and drawings that appear in, and with, the food they refuse to eat. The preschooler's scribbles, the young child's approximated spellings and more sophisticated letter shapes, and the growing child's attempts at many forms of writing indicate that writing is an ongoing and developmental process. Even for adults, the striving to become better at writing continues.

Writing serves many purposes—to inform, amuse, entertain, explore words, convince, reflect, solve problems, and improve our understandings of ourselves. Vygotsky in 1978 argued that ' ... the basic contradiction that appears in the teaching of writing ... [is] that writing is taught as a motor skill and not as a complex cultural activity ... writing must be "relevant to life" ... ' (pp.117,118).

The characteristics of early writing are unique for each child

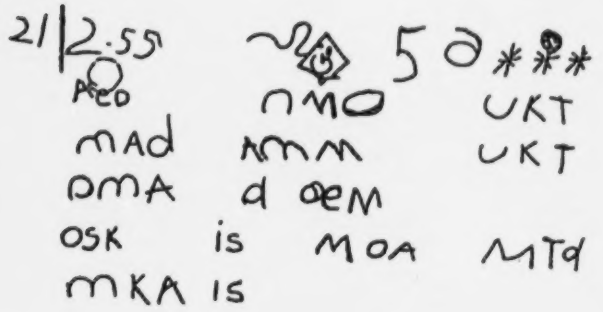
The characteristics of early writing are unique for each child. The beginnings of writing appear in drawing. Children experiment with scribbles to which they attach word meanings. Scribbles become a way of making meaning that endures in concrete ways. Often, however, children's interpretations of what they have scribbled may vary from one reading to the next. Interestingly, children's scribbles reflect the print of their cultures. Following on from scribbles, children experiment with mock letters, and these can be intermixed with conventional symbols. These conventional symbols do not always correspond with conventional letter-sound relationships, as is evident in Deena's writing.



I have a doll.

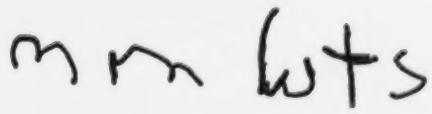
19

Recognisable words and approximate spellings begin to emerge. Dominant and beginning sounds appear in the child's attempts to move towards conventional spelling. Spaces between groups of words indicate the child's growing interest in the size and shapes of words. This is indicated in Deena's writing.



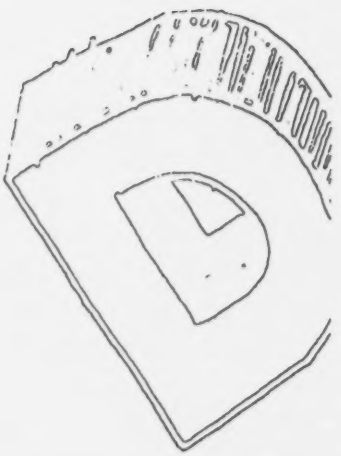
I have a Care Bear stamp. I like Care Bears because they are very nice.

One-to-one correspondence is evident in Deena's attempts to match the written word with the spoken word. Shonna also demonstrated this understanding when she presented the following series of what appeared to be random letters.



Pointing to each letter, she read: 'My mum went to Sydney.' This example also highlights the importance of listening to children's explanations of their writing attempts. My interpretation of what Shonna had written would have been very different if she had not 'read' it to me.

Learning to write is an exciting process. Children need opportunities to explore writing for their own purposes, not for the cute, contrived reasons of a teacher or caregiver.



'Writing involves kids with REAL happenings of their minds and worlds and hearts. They MUST be able to connect their writing to their real lives, real concerns, real feelings.' (Frank, 1995).

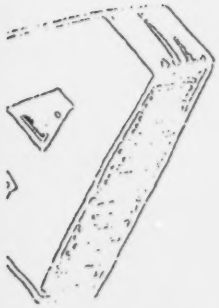
Children need to have the freedom and encouragement to write their names on their art work, to make signs, cards, and books—sharing their thoughts on paper, however unsophisticated their attempts may look. Every attempt should be celebrated as a move along the writing continuum. Model writing for children as they request it. When modeling, tell children exactly what you are doing as you write. Model on your own piece of paper rather than on the child's work. Direct their attention to other models of good writing—books, environmental print. Share your love and enthusiasm for writing as you guide children in their journey of self-discovery.

Ideas for promoting writing in the early childhood setting

- **Establish a writing centre and provide interesting and varied writing materials.**

Include:

pencils, markers, magic slates, whiteboards, alphabet stamps, used cards, magazines, paper in all shapes and sizes, coloured cards, staples, glue sticks, scissors, hole punch, old stamps, envelopes, pads of paper stapled together, wallpaper books, exercise books, 'post it' notes, tracing paper.



We have to sell literacy in ways that empower children to engage at all levels

- **Take the time to write with and for children.**

Establish a writing centre in a place where they can write uninterrupted for extended periods.

As early childhood educators, we contribute greatly to children's learning when we share our passion and enthusiasm for language and literacy. We have to sell literacy in ways that empower children to engage at all levels—snuggling up with a book, writing to the local council, making their needs known. The list is endless, and limited only by our level of insight and appreciation for the amazing learning potential of young children.

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Ensure a rich learning environment for children.

The following can all enhance children's literacy development.

Acrostic poem • Action plan • Advertisement • Alphabet story • Autobiography • Big book • Biography • Birthday card • Book review • Brainstorm ideas • Business letter • Captions • Chant • Characterisation • Cinquain • Comic strip • Concept book • Concrete poem • Cross word puzzle • Description • Dialogue journal • Diary • Easy reader • Email • Episode • Fable • Fan letter • Fantasy • Five sense poem • Flap book • Flashback • Folk song • Folk tale • Free verse • Historical fiction • How to book • Instructions • Interview • Joke • Journal • Jump rope rhyme • Junk mail • Keyhole book • Kids magazine • Knock knock joke • Legend • Letter in a bottle • Letter to the editor • Limerick • List of things to do • Memories • Message for each day • Message to a friend • Moments in history • Mystery • Myth • Narrative • Newspaper article • Nonsense • Note for the teacher • Onomatopoeia • Outline • Overview • People poem • Personal story • Picture book • Poem • Pop up book • Postcard • Project • Quick thoughts • Rap • Readers theatre • Recipe • Report • Rhyme • Riddle • Scary story • Science fiction • Science report • Screenplay • Serial • Slogan • Song • Thank you note • Timeline • Tourist map with directions • Travel brochure • Treasure • Tribute • Unconventional characters • Unusual shaped books • Valentine's Day message • Verse free • Very happy/sad words • Weather report • Web page • Words that you like book • X marks the spot • Xxoo—love letter • Yarn • Yellow book & other colours • Zodiac predictions.

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